

Weekly VBA VLER Report

January 25, 2013

Background:

The paperless processing of Veterans' claims for disability benefits is central to the success of VBA's transformation and efforts to eliminate the backlog. To achieve paperless claims processing, VBA has undertaken a number of efforts driven through the implementation of new information technology systems, including the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS).

VLER is leading efforts to support VBA through the implementation of numerous systems and programs, including:

- **Disability Benefits Questionnaires Automation Solution (DBQ AS):**
DBQ AS is designed to enable the collection and use of medical information needed to evaluate disability compensation and pension claims from Veterans. The DBQ AS consists of three IT projects: DBQ Forms Tool Project ("Harris Solution"), VLER DAS, and HDR Project
- **Vow to Hire Heroes Act (VOW)/ Veterans Employment Initiative (VEI)**
The Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 provides seamless transition for Service members, expands education and training opportunities for Veterans and provides tax credits for employers who hire Veterans with service-connected disabilities. VLER has Implemented Phase I, which initiates integration of IT services providing employment and transition benefits into the eBenefits portal. This was a recommendation in a report to the White House developed by the Veterans Employment Initiative Task Force Information Technology (IT) Working Group, which ED VLER co chairs.
- **Interagency Care Coordination Committee (IC3)**
The goal of the Information Sharing Initiative (ISI) is to meet the cross-Departmental information sharing needs of case/care management/coordination personnel on providing integrated care to Service members and Veterans. Integrated care seeks to close the traditional division between health and social care. Through the interagency comprehensive plan (CP), authoritative data will be made available by leveraging the VLER Data Access Services (DAS) to connect to the multiple clinical and non-clinical systems used to support the broad scope of work of case/care management/coordination through the creation of a single repository for this information.
 - Successful data exchanges with the Department of Defense (DoD) Army Wounded Care and Transition System in a pilot project that shared patient profiles among care coordinators in both departments.
 - Successful transition of the Federal Recovery Coordination Program (FRCP) from the Veterans Tracking Application (VTA) to the Federal Case Management Tool (FCMT).
- **IDES**
The Electronic Case File Transfer (eCFT) module enables VA and the Military Services to meet the Secretary of VA and the Secretary of Defense's directive to create a paperless, searchable Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) claims file

transferred between VA and DoD. Previously, hard-copy case files—including service treatment records (STRs), commanders' letters, narrative summaries, and compensation and pension examination reports—were sent via FedEx or other delivery methods.

- VA/DoD collaborated in the VLER Overarching Integrated Project Team (OIPT) to select and initially implement an IT solution to achieve the Secretaries' joint goal of achieving electronic case file transfer (eCFT) for Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES).
- Electronic Case File Transfer (eCFT) entered into pilot testing at the end of September 2012 and will be reviewed against performance metrics in February 2013.